



Oakland Raiders Transcript

Head Coach Jon Gruden

Q: How nice was it to see Gareon Conley back in the mix today?

Gruden: "It's great to see Gareon out there. He healed quicker than anybody expected. It's a credit to him and our training staff. We need him to get some work."

Q: How did he look moving around having not practiced for a couple weeks?

Gruden: "Pretty Good. I mean, I was surprised he had the full pads on, honestly. We limited him. We'll give him more and more each day as he gains some confidence being back on the field with pads on. It's his first padded practice, by the way."

Q: A fluke collision there with Daryl Worley and Rashaan Melvin...

Gruden: "That happens in football. You know, we're hoping everybody's alright. I'll have an update later. Obviously, Daryl left practice."

Q: How do you think Shilique Calhoun played on Friday?

Gruden: "You know, Shilique played really well and had some impact plays in the game. Just looking for more consistency and more out of him. He's a guy that has had an interesting career here. He's been on the practice squad, he's been brought back, he's paid the price in the offseason, but he's on our radar now. He did some good things."

Q: What did you see out of P.J. Hall and Maurice Hurst after watching the film from the game?

Gruden: "Well, first play P.J. came in, he got a sack. He batted a ball down, so he was disruptive. I thought Maurice had some really good rushes. He didn't get a sack, but he got home. Yeah, I was pleased with it. I think it's an area that we've gone out to try to improve and we have a long way to go. But, there were some good signs."

Q: What areas of Hall's and Hurst's game do you want to see them work at most?

Gruden: "Well, I think conditioning, number one. If you're going to be a great defensive player, you have to get yourself in premier shape, because it's tough. I think you have to defend a lot of different kinds of plays – getting off double teams, trap blocks, executing stunts and wining when you're one on one against really good players is not as easy as it appears."

Q: How important is Connor Cook's consistency and what are some positives you have seen from him in the game and in practice?

Gruden: "Well, he did some positive things. I liked the look in his eye. I thought he was confident, he was in control, and again he moved the football team and did some good things. We made it hard on him today, put him in some tough positions. You don't get a chance to read your clippings and celebrate your press conferences for long in this business. So, hopefully he got his eyes opened today and can learn from his film. He obviously missed a couple throws we expect him to hit."

Q: What did you throw at him today?

Gruden: "I'm not going to be specific. *(laughter)*"

Q: How would you describe the back and forth between Connor Cook and EJ Manuel?

Coach Gruden: "Both of them have been really good. It's hard. They're standing there and if you can just imagine, you never know who is going to get called and when. You're just basically watching practice, trying to keep your mind in it. You never know if it's going to be Cook or Manuel. You never know how much you're going to get to play and how long you're going to get to play. That's the part of being the backup quarterback. You get called upon in short notice and you have to perform. We're still figuring out who's the No. 2 quarterback."



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Q: How did Ian Silberman look to you on Friday night?

Coach Gruden: "I give him credit. He's played a lot of positions for us. [Breno] Giacomini is hurt. Brandon Parker is hurt. We needed somebody to come in and step up and he did that. I think he got edged one time on a pass set, but other than that he did a good job. I said it a couple of times here, you can only keep so many lineman and you can only have so many linemen available on gameday. He's going to have to play emergency tight end. He's going to have to play emergency guard and tackle. Right now he's answer the bell in those areas."

Q: How has David Sharpe stepped up in his spot?

Coach Gruden: "He's in the mix. I just have high expectations for him. I probably have way too high of expectations for Sharpe. I raised the bar four more inches today. Every time he gets close, I seem to raise it too far for him. I have high expectations for that young man. We're going to keep pushing him until he gets there."

Q: You were upset because Connor Cook didn't break the huddle properly.

Coach Gruden: "I wasn't mad at him. He just had a lackluster huddle break. You start becoming like all the other teams that don't huddle. Nobody huddles, nobody communicates anymore. If you watch high school and college and a lot of the pro teams, they never get in the huddle. But when we get in there, we have to convey a lot of information. When we get out of there, we have to break the huddle together and crisply so we can get lined up and get moving. I put that on the center and I put that on a quarterback. I guess I got a little upset."

Q: How important is what Tom Cable is doing with the offensive line?

Coach Gruden: "That's what Cable does. That's what Cable does. He's going to find five Cable guys, that's what I called them. Right tackle goes down, somebody steps up. If you look around the league last year, there's one team, only one team that had all their starters available for all 16 games and that was the Rams. I mean my brother had 20 different combinations. It's ridiculous. So get used to it. We have to get some versatility. We have to be able to adapt on who's up, who's down. That's why Tom Cable is here. He's a great line coach."

Q: How important is that than to get him to come back here?

Coach Gruden: "It's great. I said it when we hired him, I'm as proud of our coaching staff as anybody's in the league. I'll take these guys against anybody. His history here and his background as championship coaches is certainly going to be beneficial for a lot of us."

Q: What did you think about the Karl Joseph hit that was flagged?

Coach Gruden: "I don't want to talk about it anymore. Safety, don't dip your head, I'm tired of it. I didn't like a lot of calls in the game. First play of the game, my tight end got thrown on the ground. Next play of the game, we had a 60-yard run called back. I thought there was pass interference on the bomb to Martavis Bryant. I'm not going to stand up here and question every call but I'm going to do the best I can to make those three points."

Q: Is Bryant dealing with something today?

Coach Gruden: "He has a headache. He's in his room, he has a headache. Hopefully he gets better soon."

Q: What have you thought about Marquel Lee's development?

Coach Gruden: "There is a guy that really stepped up. He had a great game. He's physical. I think he's more and more of a complete linebacker. He's getting more comfortable in pass coverage. I think he's a presence in the middle of our defense right now. It's something that is not going unnoticed with his teammates and coaches."

Q: Can he be a three-down linebacker?

Coach Gruden: "That's the goal, that's the goal. It takes a lot of work. He's still a young linebacker. He's learning a new defense. He's earning more and more looks."



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Q: Do you see the nucleus of a team that can thump with Keith Smith and Chris Warren?

Coach Gruden: "I hope so. If you go back to what we said initially we're going to try to run the ball. To do that, you have to have the components to do it. We have two blocking tight ends, we've got a big fullback, we've got two backs in this league that have gained almost 1,500 yards. Chris Warren is a good player, and the two other guys ran hard, [DeAndre] Washington and [Jalen] Richard. I think we will be able to run the ball to some degree. It's going to be a team thing."

Q: What's going on with Breno?

Coach Gruden: "It's a knee. He's having some pain and swelling in his knee. He's improving and hopefully we get him out soon."

Q: Is there any updates on Obi Melifonwu's situation?

Coach Gruden: "He's still injured. Still being evaluated. He's being looked at. I don't have anything official. He's still being evaluated."

Q: After the weekend off, is Donald Penn closer?

Coach Gruden: "Don't know that either. It's an ongoing process. We'll update you when we know something."

Q: How'd you feel about how you came out of the game injury-wise?

Coach Gruden: "Pretty good. We had a number of players that couldn't play going into the game. I'm anxious to get Gilchrist back out here and Conley. I'm anxious to see Arden Key. We need to get Brandon Parker on this field and playing in games. We had a number of guys that were unable to play. Hopefully we can get them up and get them going against the Rams a little bit. We came out pretty good."